

RED FEATHER PEOPLE . . . "Front Woman" for the YWCA



Jo Windsor

Two teen-age girls, furtive, jittery, obviously strangers. They keep pouring nickels into the pay phone. Then they sidle up to the information desk. Embarrassed yet bold, they try to borrow a dollar. The woman on duty shepherds them into her office, discovers they are run-aways. Both from the same Pennsylvania town, they have come to Buffalo to look for jobs. Gently the woman draws them out. Belligerence turns to tears. They agree to go to the YWCA residence to think it over. A long distance call is made. Soon the families arrive and two repentent, grateful little girls go home . . . This is another incident in the life of Ellen J. Windsor, administrative assistant at the downtown YWCA. Her information desk is the first and often the only point of contact with the YW. To the hundreds who know little of its fine group work service, but who turn here for other information and for help when in trouble, "Jo" and her three associates are the YWCA. Not a trained social worker, she does all in her power to sift, to sort, to help when she can, to refer to specialists when she should. Perhaps her heart's softest spot is reserved for the "sitters" — lonely souls who spend long hours in the quiet lobby. Not social risks — just alone — to Jo they are pathetic but very dear. She dreams of a place for them — a kind of home where all can live "separately," but still with company and someone to look out for them . . . In the nearly 20 years she has served the YW, Miss Windsor has helped many thousands of people. And years later, when they write back, the one person they almost always ask about is Jo Windsor.

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